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ABSTRACT

Two teachers recount the 2 years they each spent teaching an autistic 9-year-old boy named Bernie. The first teacher reviews Bernie's life history, reporting the facts of his birth and followup examinations which revealed no medical abnormality. The teacher then describes her work with Bernie at the Therapeutic Nursery School. After an initial adjustment period, Bernie is described as beginning to accept contact, and allowing such activities as having his stomach rubbed and gentle blowing on his neck and face. It is explained that the major successful intervention therapy used was simultaneous communication, which was introduced in the second year. This approach, introduced after eye contact had been established, is described as having a remarkable impact on Bernie's speech. The second teacher elaborates on the subsequent 2 years in which Bernie's education continued at a public elementary school in a class for autistic children. The class setting and procedures are outlined and the development of self care and academic skills is explained. Behavior modification techniques to control such behaviors as tantrums and hand flapping are discussed. The use of simultaneous communication, which had been continued from the nursery, was now eliminated it is explained. The teacher records that Bernie began to read and do simple math. (PHR)

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Bernie: A Four-Year Psychoeducational Intervention in a
Therapeutic Preschool and a Public School Class for Autistic Children

Part I
A Boy Named Bernie

presented at
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The Council for Exceptional Children

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A Boy Named Bernie

Into every special educator's life, at some time in his/her career, a truly "special" child enters. In my experience, and that of Mary Boudreaux from whom you will hear a little later, such a child was Bernie. Mary and I each taught Bernie for two memorable years, and we would like to share with you our experiences of these four years.

As to background social history, Bernie was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on May 7, 1971, weighed 6 pounds, 15 ounces, and was 20 inches long. Pregnancy and labor were normal. At the time of Bernie's birth, his father was a 23-year-old post-graduate rabbinical student, his mother a 19-year-old homemaker and part-time student. Both parents are originally from Texas.

The parents report a normal infancy. They became concerned when Bernie had no speech at two years, and when he was uncooperative in a nursery school which he attended twice weekly for one month at age two years, four months. Bernie's Cincinnati pediatrician referred him for a hearing test. Bernie attended a Diagnostic Nursery School for Language Handicapped Children, and after three once-weekly sessions, a psychiatrist was called in for an evaluation. The speech and hearing center did not feel that auditory acuity was a factor in Bernie's problem. The psychiatrist recommended an additional six-week evaluation in the Preschool Prevention Program diagnostic nursery school, in order to answer the parents' question about a suitable area in which to locate, where Bernie's therapeutic needs could best be met.

An organic work-up was also conducted. A routine physical examination and laboratory tests were reported by his pediatrician as normal. A genetic investigation revealed "probable normal chromosomes in a phenotypic male

with autistic behavior." An ophthalmological examination was entirely normal. A pediatric neurologist found no evidence of any neurological disease, and felt that Bernie had a primary psychiatric problem which might be organic in nature. An EMI brain scan revealed no abnormality. The psychiatrist's impressions were that Bernie displayed atypical ego development of psychotic proportions. The parents were guided toward a university child psychiatry therapeutic nursery program in the community of vocational relocation.

Following Bernie's father's ordination, the family moved to New Orleans in mid-October, 1974. It was in New Orleans that Bernie was diagnosed as classically autistic by three psychiatrists, each of whom evaluated him independently. Bernie entered the Therapeutic Nursery School (TNS) of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Louisiana State University Medical Center. TNS is an outpatient facility which treats behaviorally disordered preschool children; its multidisciplinary approach includes contributions from psychiatry, psychology, social work, education, speech pathology, occupational therapy, and drama therapy. As teacher-therapist, I accepted the assignment of Bernie with some apprehension: 1) because the parents appeared sophisticated, and seemed to already know much of what we usually teach in the first few months, and 2) because the grandparents were also professional, one an allergist and the other a geneticist. Apprehension on my part quickly dissipated, as I found the parents warm and cooperative, and the visiting grandparents supportive and appreciative of our efforts.

After two sessions at TNS, Bernie separated easily from his mother. His early behavior was characterized by frequent running around the room from window to door; some of his wandering was productive to explore equipment,

but much seemed aimless, occasionally almost animal-like in its intensity and noise quality. By his fourth appointment, Bernie's mother reported his eagerness to come to school and his disappointment at getting into the car and finding--on occasion--that he was going elsewhere. Bernie's fifth session coincided with that of two other children with many autistic features. Bernie seemed neither disturbed by, nor particularly aware of, the presence of the other children and their teachers, though on occasion he gave a child a long hard look and, more rarely, an apparently empty embrace. Bernie settled down to do table work, used much of the equipment appropriately, and caught on quickly to new materials. After two weeks Bernie actively resisted going home.

Outdoors Bernie was in constant motion. After three brief sessions in the play yard, Bernie learned to use the slide with no help, and to pedal a trike, though he had some difficulty in maneuvering a turn when the bike approached a barrier. Usually, Bernie actively sought outdoor time.

After four weeks, a suitable reinforcer was found for which Bernie would work. Using Cheerios, Bernie's book-turning behavior was slowed down to a speed which allowed him to be read to. Bernie's new, intense interest in books carried over into his home and has continued strong. Around this time, Bernie began to enjoy close contact with me, and "baby games" in a big chair. He tolerated my rubbing his tummy and fingering his face, and seemed to enjoy gentle blowing on his neck and face, moving his head to differentially receive the contact. A month later, Bernie reciprocated by blowing on me--a new behavior for him. He also learned to enjoy having his head lowered to the floor and pulled back up again.

After five weeks, Bernie was comfortable enough to enjoy dashing from the classroom through the building, when the dutch door was left unlocked;

he giggled in obvious glee, whenever he was able to pull off this mischievous caper. Bernie seemed to find "Ring Around the Rosy" with the other boys pleasurable, and occasionally enjoyed the outdoor swing with one of the children. Bernie always toileted appropriately at school, sometimes on his own but more often at my suggestion.

When Bernie became upset with me--because of a withheld reward, or because he was not allowed to go outside--he made loud angry noises, gave a menacing look, and lunged forward as if to attack. But he never actually hurt anyone. Once Bernie completely fell apart when he accidentally tore the cover off a book, crying even while the book was being repaired. After that, Bernie recovered completely as if the incident had not occurred.

I made a lunchtime home visit when Bernie had been at TNS for three months. Although Bernie was told that I was coming, he seemed overwhelmed nonetheless. He cried softly in excitement for the first ten minutes, and withdrew to an egg-shaped chair in the den and then upstairs to his parents' bedroom. He gradually calmed, and joined us at lunch. Bernie ate in snatches, moving back and forth and to the couch, and even upstairs to his room. Later, I offered some management assistance in the area of appropriate mealtime demands, and made suggestions regarding toy storage and availability. On my return visit seven months later, I learned that Bernie's mother had incorporated all of my suggestions.

After four months at TNS, Bernie's attendance was expanded to include one morning a week in addition to two afternoons. This schedule was operative until September, 1975, when Bernie's attendance was expanded to four mornings per week. When Bernie had been at TNS for four months, I participated in an intensive behavior modification workshop, after which behavior mod with Bernie was expanded to include eye contact and compliance training.

In June, 1975, Bernie's parents attended the National Society for Autistic Children (NSAC) Annual Meeting in San Diego. Subsequent to this, they formed the first local affiliate NSAC chapter. Bernie's father served as its president for three years.

Bernie was evaluated by LSU Speech and Language Clinic in July, 1975 as part of a total workup of TNS children. Bernie presented a severe receptive and expressive language deficit. He demonstrated a short attention span, and appeared able to relate neither to the examiner, objects, nor pictures. Following evaluation, Bernie received speech and language remediation through the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology.

Also while at TNS an occupational therapy evaluation was administered and therapy provided. Bernie exhibited a positive asymmetrical tonic neck reflex and unusual responses to vestibular stimulation, which suggested a maturational delay in sensorimotor integration. Accordingly, occupational therapy goals included sensory integrative therapy to facilitate homeostasis between excitatory and inhibitory influences in the CNS, integration of primitive postural reflexes, and facilitation of selected motor milestones.

The specific intervention at TNS which made a major difference in Bernie's development was the use of simultaneous communication, a technique implemented at our setting after Bernie had been with us for a year. I'd like to digress a bit from my case report on Bernie to tell you about this innovative approach, which we learned about at the 1975 NSAC meeting which Bernie's parents also attended.

Simultaneous communication--sometimes called total communication--is a method engaging tactile, visual, oral, and auditory modalities, and combining spoken language with signed English (Gustason, Pfetzing, & Zawolkow, 1972), a formal motor language customarily reserved for the deaf. Signed

English closely parallels the syntax of everyday verbal English and assures a one-to-one correspondence between simultaneously presented manual sounds and spoken words. The goal of the approach is not speech--although verbal language is warmly welcomed if it does occur--but rather a viable communication system affording its users the ability to effectively interact with their environment.

Perhaps the greatest immediate appeal of this new component was its "good fit" with other facets of our program, its compatibility with an intrusive approach within a developmental framework, with active parent participation. A second appeal was the way in which signing turns a liability into an asset by legitimizing the autistic-like child's characteristic ability to make complex hand movements.

Prior to the introduction of sign, traditional speech therapy had been used at our school in an attempt to ameliorate the autistic child's impaired language skills. But success in evoking speech was extremely limited, and there was little transfer of training. We were ready to try a new approach. Because our former speech and language consultant declined to include motor language in the 25 minute speech therapy session which most of our children were getting at the time, the responsibility for the implementation of sign fell upon the teacher-therapists--a fortunate happening in retrospect, since the teachers' use of sign expanded the children's potential exposure from the 25 minute speech therapy session to the full 3 hour morning.

The speech consultant soon recognized the value of the innovative approach, and many of the graduate students whom she supervised began using some sign in the small-group speech session which now supplements the earlier individual therapy model for autistic-like children. Our current speech and language consultant has shared her own enthusiasm for total communication

with her graduate students. The method is now used in small-group and individual sessions, when appropriate. Sign is compatible with the other parts of our program and has integrated well with more traditional forms of speech therapy.

Before sign can be included in a child's treatment, some social interaction, eye contact, and compliance training are needed. Intrusive therapy is used, in order to make and maintain contact with the child, to facilitate his body and affective awareness, and to enhance social interaction. To be intrusive, a therapist does whatever will make her presence felt by the child (Creedon, 1973), such as the "baby games" with Bernie, which I described earlier. Intrusion is physical, tactile, and affectively and auditorally oriented. It involves entering the child's world, recognizing and acknowledging his possible discomfort, but continuing contact, so that the therapist-child dyad can share universal experiences.

Just how did we implement sign into the TNS? Armed with the Creedon manual (1973), the teachers and several mothers took a few initial lessons in signed English from a local interpreter for the deaf, and we were in business. We met no parental resistance. Most mothers observed frequent training sessions, participated actively in one of the four weekly sessions, and taught their spouses what they learned. Ideally both parents used the communication model in the home, reinforcing our work and facilitating its generalization to other settings.

Approximately 15 minutes of each 3 hour school day are devoted exclusively to simultaneous language instruction. The child and the therapist are seated facing each other, with the child's knees held gently but firmly within the adult's knees. This position of control frees the therapist's hands to establish eye contact, to demonstrate the sign, to mold the child's

hand/hands into the sign, and to immediately reward approximations to the desired behavior. Later, the therapist merely prompts the sign, and eventually fades the prompt. The therapist not only vocalizes what she signs, but verbally interprets the child's gestural response as well.

Since autistic children do not readily imitate and typically have an impairment of gesture as well as in spoken language, the therapist may need to physically put the child through the sign many times. Choice of signs is critical; those selected must be relevant to the child's food preference or to another of his needs or wants, since that food or want will be a potent reinforcer. It is important that the therapist speak "economically," directly to the child, and always with eye-to-eye contact; whenever possible, it is desirable that the movement of the sign reinforce the syllables of speech. Tactile, visual, and auditory channels are maximally engaged only when clarity of sign is combined with precise speech articulation.

In addition to the structured session, the children have additional receptive exposure when simultaneous communication is used informally in the playroom with a small group. Sign is paired with verbal speech in greeting, song, rhyme, instruction, and announcement of activity change. The combination of sign and sound has become a significant part of our intervention strategy. To demonstrate the results of our efforts, I would like to share with you a video record of our experience with Bernie. . . The first film segment was taken early in Bernie's attendance, and dramatically demonstrates his acute frustration at being unable to communicate. (Show film segment 1.)

XXX

Bernie was still totally without speech a year later, when the new communication mode was first implemented at our school, with Bernie signing

"cookie." After two lessons, Bernie said an identifiable approximation of "cookie," his first word, while being put through the sign at home. (It was a month before he said it again, however.) After three weeks, Bernie learned to sign "cookie." The next film segment clearly demonstrates Bernie's mother's active participation in the program. Note that at first Bernie was uninvolved; then he cooperated passively, then actively anticipated the sign, and then signed. It is interesting that we missed Bernie's first "baby sign." Creedon (1976 a) recommends early acceptance of approximation, and that the therapist not demand "perfect diction" at first. (Show film segment 2.)

XXX

The next video segments were all filmed during Bernie's third month of training. He learned several signs, each of which dropped out quickly as he replaced it with verbal speech. On the day the sign for chip was introduced, Bernie said "chip," though his articulation was poor. Note Bernie's eagerness to ask for chip. . . As the video proceeds, you will see the increasing appropriateness of Bernie's affect, and his first simultaneous communication, when he signed and said "drink." . . . Later, when Bernie was saying "chip" and "drink" with his mother, he corrected her misinterpretation. His positive intentionality is revealed, along with his annoyance at being misunderstood. (Show film segment 3.)

XXX

The final video clip on Bernie was filmed in late July, '76, after nine months of training, and represents Bernie's 116th--and final--lesson at TNS. You will note increased signing on my part. It was thrilling to see Bernie's confidence grow as he became more competent in communication. He was verbal-

izing two- and occasionally three-word combinations, and his parents estimated his spontaneous verbal repertoire in excess of 150 words. But Bernie's gains were not only in language but in cognitive and social skills, as well. (Show film segment 4.)

XXX

When Bernie left TNS after two years, he still had many autistic features, such as occasional fleeting eye contact; occasional facial asymmetry in the mouth area; infrequent, apparently meaningless running outdoors--often accompanied by animal-like sounds; teeth-grinding; sensitivity to some noises; and inability to relate normally to other children. He learned to wave, to undress and partially dress himself, to sit throughout lunch, to throw and catch a ball, and to be self-directed in extended and skilled table work. He enjoyed contact more, and the quality of his contact improved. He was much more appropriate-looking, and seemed much more at peace with himself. He was ready for kindergarten work, and fortunately for him, was placed in the Jefferson Parish Public School classroom of a skilled and sensitive teacher, Mary Boudreaux. Before Mary continues our story of a boy named Bernie, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about my work with him.

XXX

Later, if there is time, I'll be happy to share with you theories which the literature offers about how and why signing works.

Addendum

According to Piagetian theory (1954), the development of language and cognition follows a regular progression in which children first learn to direct their body actions, then their distal senses (sight, hearing), and finally their language and thought toward objects and events beyond their mediate milieu. A further Piagetian assumption (1954) is that the earliest component, directed body action, provides the base on which subsequently developing intentional activity is built. Furth (1976) feels that simultaneous language ties in neatly with Piaget's theory (1954) of a spontaneous gesture base to communication, and that by activating this base, the model may eventuate in speech.

Schaeffer et al. (1976) feel that actions in sign are linked to a wealth of perceptual and affective information. Fulwiler and Fouts (1976) allude to the tactile stimulation provided in shaping signs. The chairman of my department, William Easson (1976), finds a value in that the stimuli provided in signing are useable, filtered, and carefully controlled, step-by-step.

Miller and Miller (1973) allude to the remoteness of spoken words from their respective referents, implying, in contrast, the observable relationship between many signs and their referents. Not only does the sign "ball" look like a ball, but unlike the word which disappears immediately once articulated, the visual image of the sign remains. The Millers (1973) suggest that by pairing sign with spoken word, the meaning inherent in the sign transfers to the oral word, thereby facilitating the understanding of receptive verbal language and for some, stimulating the development of expressive verbal language, as well.

Hermelin and O'Connor (1970) state that autistic children are motorically facile, and in a learning situation often rely on motor rather than visual or verbal cues. Schlesinger and Meadow (1972) agree on the need for techniques which stress action and physical involvement, and state that acceptance of the preferred modality may "insure optimal use of other more neglected modalities through association pathways" (p. 43).

Creedon (1976 b) observes that "children feel, see and hear the language" (p. 78) when the simultaneous communication model is employed--in other words, that chances of getting through to the children are enhanced by the dual channels of sign and sound. Schaeffer et al. (1976) agree that the therapist's voice or his signs--or their combination--may serve as a cue for the child's response; they propose the child's fading of signs as evidence of the internalization of their meaning. If it is true as Bryson's experiments (1970, 1972) suggest that a short-term memory problem is the basic cognitive defect in autistic children, then the success of the simultaneous communication model may be due to the fact that both auditory and visual stimuli are presented together in temporal space. Indeed, simultaneous presentation of stimuli is a key educational strategy proposed by Gallagher and Wiegnerink (1976).

Rimland (1964) hypothesizes that autistic children are deficient in skills associated with the left hemisphere of the brain--specifically processing sequential auditory input--and that they are more skilled in musical and spatial tasks associated with the right side. Based on this hypothesis, Offir (1976) proposes that sign may work because its visual quality capitalizes on the stronger half of the brain. Schlesinger and Meadow (1972) report on the close anatomical proximity in the brain between the motor area for speech and that for the hand. Fulwiler and Fouts (1976) suggest that the autistic child's language deficiency "may be due to an inability to make

specific crossmodal association and not just an inability to process the auditory or visual information per se" (p. 44). They credit the visual quality of sign with avoidance of the cross modal difficulty.

There is limited literature on simultaneous communication, but what there is contains seemingly limitless theories of why and how it works. Fortunately, as Offir (1976) astutely observed, "autistic children do not have to wait for the theorists to explain the power of sign" (p. 78).

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Note: Part 1 mailed
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BERNIE: A FOUR-YEAR PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION IN A
THERAPEUTIC PRESCHOOL AND A PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASS FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN

PART II

BERNIE ENTERS PUBLIC SCHOOL

PRESENTED AT
57TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF
THE COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

APRIL 23-27, 1979
DALLAS, TEXAS

BY
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BERNIE ENTERED THE AUTISTIC CLASS AT AIRLINE PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, JEFFERSON PARISH PUBLIC SCHOOLS, METAIRIE, LOUISIANA ON AUGUST 31, 1976. THE FACT THAT HE CAME TO US FROM THE THERAPEUTIC NURSERY WAS EXTREMELY HELPFUL, AS THEY PROVIDED ALL THE NECESSARY INFORMATION REGARDING FUNCTIONING LEVELS, SKILLS, INTERESTS, ABILITIES, ETC. IN ADDITION, WE HAD HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBSERVE HIM. THROUGH A CONFERENCE WITH HIS MOTHER, WE LEARNED OF POSSIBLE REWARDS, RESPONSE TO AFFECTION, INTERESTS, INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS, ETC.

THE CLASS IS IN A PORTABLE BUILDING. BATHROOMS ARE IN THE ROOM. IT IS AIR CONDITIONED, THEREFORE THERE ARE ONLY TWO SMALL, HIGH WINDOWS WHICH ARE CURTAINED. EACH CHILD'S DESK IS IN A CURTAINED CUBICLE. THIS ARRANGEMENT AIDS A GREAT DEAL IN DECREASING AND ELIMINATING DISTRACTIONS. LUNCH AND PLAY PERIODS ARE WITH THE REGULAR ELEMENTARY CLASSES.

THERE WERE FOUR CHILDREN, ONE TEACHER AND ONE ASSISTANT IN BERNIS'S GROUP. IN THE MORNING, INDIVIDUAL TASKS - ONE ON ONE - WERE DONE. THE LENGTH OF TASK TIME DEPENDED UPON THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD'S ABILITY TO ATTEND. AT THIS TIME, THE CHILDREN WORKED AT THEIR DESKS. THOSE WHO WERE NOT GETTING INSTRUCTION FROM THE TEACHERS WORKED ON TASKS THEY COULD SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE INDEPENDENTLY. THESE TASKS REENFORCED LEARNED SKILLS. RECESS AND SNACK TIME WERE PART OF THE MORNING ACTIVITIES. SOCIAL SKILLS (SHARING, FOOD, SETTING TABLE, CLEARING TABLE), TABLE MANNERS (APPROPRIATE SITTING, CHEWING, HANDLING OF FOOD, ETC.) AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT (PLEASE, THANK YOU, ASKING FOR FOOD APPROPRIATELY) ACCORDING TO EACH CHILD'S ABILITY TO VERBALIZE WAS PART OF THE SNACK TIME. RECESS TIME WAS PART FREE PLAY AND PART STRUCTURED PLAY ACTIVITIES - AS CLIMBING, SLIDING, BALL PLAY, ETC. AFTER HAVING LUNCH IN THE CAFETERIA, THERE WAS A QUIET TIME. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY GROUP ACTIVITIES.

BERNIE'S ADJUSTMENT TO HIS NEW SCHOOL WAS RAPID. HE FUSSED FOR A FEW MINUTES AFTER HIS MOTHER LEFT ON THE FIRST DAY, BUT DID NOT TANTRUM. IN ORDER TO HELP CALM HIM AND ASSIST IN HIS ADJUSTMENT TO THIS STRANGE, NEW WORLD, WE PLAYED FOR A WHILE - USING, MAINLY, A BALANCE DISC. SINCE HE KNEW THE ALPHABET AND LIKED TO WORK PUZZLES THESE WERE OUR FIRST TASKS. SIMULTANEOUS COMMUNICATION WAS CONTINUED, THOUGH BERNIE NO LONGER SIGNED. HE VERBALIZED AND ATTEMPTED ALL WORDS GIVEN. AT THIS TIME, BERNIE WOULD SIT AND ATTEND FOR FIVE MINUTES. FOOD, VERBAL PRAISE AND HUGS WERE THE IMMEDIATE REWARDS. GRANDMA'S LAW, "FIRST WORK THEN SWING", WORKED WELL WITH HIM. HE LOVED TO USE THE NET SWING AND THIS WAS HIS REWARD UPON COMPLETION OF A TASK. THIS WAS A GOOD SOURCE OF VESTIBULAR STIMULATION. DURING THE FIRST YEAR, BERNIE LOVED TO TWIST THE ROPE AND LET IT SPIN OUT. AT THIS TIME, THERE WAS NO NYSTAGMUS. ANOTHER REWARD WAS TO ROLL ON THE LARGE THERAPY BALL. THIS BALL WAS, ALSO, USED DURING EXERCISE TIME AS IT WAS A GOOD SOURCE OF VESTIBULAR, TACTILE AND OTHER PROPRIOCEPTIVE INPUT.

ELIMINATION OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS WAS GENERALLY ACHIEVED BY IGNORING THEM. IF THIS PROVED UNSUCCESSFUL WE WOULD USE A SHORT TIME-OUT. THE CUBICLES (OR OFFICES AS WE CALL THEM) HAVE CURTAINS. TIME-OUT MEANT, THE TEACHER CLEARED THE DESK, CLOSED THE CURTAIN AND REMAINED OUTSIDE UNTIL BERNIE BECAME QUIET. THE TEACHER, THEN, RETURNED AND COMPLETED THE TASK. NO TASK WAS LEFT INCOMPLETE EVEN IF IT WAS NECESSARY TO PROMPT HIM THROUGH TO COMPLETION.

IT WAS PLANNED FOR BERNIE'S SCHOOL DAYS TO BE FROM 8:30 A.M. TO 12 NOON. THIS LASTED TWO DAYS - ON THE SECOND DAY BERNIE WAS QUITE UPSET WHEN HIS MOTHER ARRIVED AT NOON. HE WAS AWARE THAT THE OTHER CHILDREN DID NOT LEAVE THEN. ON THE THIRD DAY HE REMAINED THROUGH LUNCH AND ON THE FOURTH DAY ATTENDED UNTIL 2 P.M. (A FULL DAY). HIS NEXT WISH WAS TO "RIDE BUS". AFTER HIS FIRST WEEK IN SCHOOL HE STARTED RIDING THE BUS IN THE AFTERNOON. MOTHER CONTINUED TO BRING

HIM IN THE MORNING. THIS WAS DUE, MAINLY, TO BERNIE'S POOR SLEEPING HABITS.

DURING THE FIRST FEW MONTHS CLOSE CONTACT WAS MAINTAINED WITH THE THERAPEUTIC NURSERY. TO ASSIST IN HIS TRANSITION, THEY CONTINUED TO SEE HIM ONE AFTERNOON A WEEK FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. PARENT CONFERENCES WERE FREQUENT - OFTEN DAILY DURING THE EARLY MONTHS.

TASKS INTRODUCED INTO HIS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM WERE COLOR AND NUMBER IDENTIFICATION, SHAPE RECOGNITION, AND THE CONCEPT OF BIG AND LITTLE. INDEPENDENT TASKS INCLUDED ALPHABET SEQUENCING (USING THE STEP LANGUAGE BOARD, A SELF CORRECTING TOOL) AND PUZZLES. BY THE END OF THE SECOND WEEK REBUS READING, BEGINNING PENCIL SKILLS AND THE USE OF THE LANGUAGE MASTER WERE ADDED. BERNIE LOVED TO BE BUSY AND WAS SELF-MOTIVATED TO LEARN. HE THOROUGHLY ENJOYED USING LEARNING MACHINES AND USED THEM APPROPRIATELY. AFTER TWO OR THREE INSTRUCTIONAL SESSIONS, HE COULD OPERATE THEM INDEPENDENTLY.

ONE PROBLEM DURING INDEPENDENT TASK TIME AROSE OUT OF BERNIE'S NEED TO DO EVERYTHING CORRECTLY. HE WOULD BECOME FRUSTRATED AND FUSS (MAKE LOUD COMPLAINING NOISES - NO WORDS) IF HE COULD NOT COMPLETE A TASK OR WAS NOT SURE OF THE CORRECT ANSWER. IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE THE FRUSTRATION AND GIVE BERNIE AN APPROPRIATE MANNER IN WHICH TO RESPOND, EACH TIME HE STARTED COMPLAINING, ONE OF US WOULD GO TO HIM AND TELL HIM TO SAY "HELP ME". AT FIRST, HE WOULD DO THIS FROM HIS DESK, BUT AS HE BECAME MORE SECURE, HE WOULD COME TO ONE OF THE TEACHERS AND SAY "HELP ME". LATER, THAT TURNED INTO A QUESTION RELATING TO THE PROBLEM - AS $1 + 1 = 2$ IN A QUESTIONING TONE OR $1 + 1 ???$

SELF HELP SKILLS - ZIPPING, SNAPPING, BUTTONING AND HAND WASHING WERE AMONG AFTERNOON GROUP ACTIVITIES. THESE SKILLS WERE ALSO TAUGHT WHEN THE CHILDREN REMOVED AND PUT ON COATS AND AT TOILETING TIME. ALL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANY INCIDENTAL TEACHING WERE UTILIZED.

"LOOK AND DO" A PERCEPTUAL MOTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM WAS DONE THREE AFTERNOONS A WEEK WITH THE OTHER AUTISTIC CLASS. EACH CHILD WORKS INDEPENDENTLY ON A PICTURE AT THEIR DESK. VERBALIZATION OF INSTRUCTIONS IS MINIMAL AS THE CHILDREN ARE TO LOOK AT A PROJECTED PICTURE AND MAKE THEIRS LOOK EXACTLY LIKE IT, USING COLORED PIPE CLEANERS, POPSICLE STICKS, AND DISKS. CRAYONS ARE ALSO USED. AFTER A WEEK BERNIE WORKED INDEPENDENTLY WHEN ARRANGING STICKS, ETC. PROMPT WAS NEEDED FOR CRAYON WORK AS HIS PENCIL SKILLS WERE POOR. HE WOULD SELECT THE APPROPRIATE COLOR - POINT TO THE PROPER PLACE TO START AND WE WOULD PROMPT THE NEEDED MOVEMENT. THE SAME APPROACH WAS USED WHEN CUTTING WAS REQUIRED.

THE PEABODY LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, SHAPE, COLOR AND NUMBER DOMINOES, MUSIC ACTIVITIES AND EXERCISE WERE INCLUDED IN AFTERNOON GROUP ACTIVITIES. MUCH ENCOURAGEMENT WAS NEEDED TO KEEP BERNIE SITTING AND ATTENDING. HE DID NOT WANT TO WAIT FOR OTHERS TO HAVE THEIR TURN.

EXERCISE WAS NOT A FAVORITE PART OF HIS DAY. SINCE HE DID LITTLE IMITATING, WE HAD TO PROMPT HIM THROUGH THE ACTIVITIES.

DURING THESE FIRST MONTHS THERE WAS NO INTERACTION WITH THE OTHER CHILDREN IN THE CLASS OR ON THE PLAYGROUND. RECESS WAS WITH FIRST AND SECOND GRADE. HE WATCHED ALL THE CHILDREN VERY CAREFULLY - AS HE DID ANYTIME CHILDREN WERE MOVING AROUND THE SCHOOL. HE WATCHED THEM LINE UP, GO TO THEIR CLASSES, GO ON THE PLAYGROUND. HE WAS FASCINATED BY THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN HE SAW. HE WAS QUITE OBSERVANT AND QUICKLY LEARNED HIS WAY AROUND SCHOOL.

SEPTEMBER'S END SAW BERNIE SEQUENCING 0 - 5 AND BEGINNING TO DEVELOP THE CONCEPT OF HOW MANY. HE COULD MATCH COLORS BUT IDENTIFIED ONLY RED AND ORANGE ON VERBAL REQUEST. HE COULD BUCKLE AND BUTTON.

IN APPROXIMATELY SIX WEEKS BEAD PATTERNS, PICTURE SEQUENCING (4 PART FAMILIAR ACTIVITIES), NUMBER RECOGNITION THROUGH 15, CONCEPT OF SAME AND DIFFERENT, WORD RECOGNITION OF CHILDREN'S NAMES, NAMES OF DAYS AND MONTHS, BEGINNING SIGHT WORDS (USING PICTURE-WORD CARDS) WERE INTRODUCED. BERNIE WAS USING THE LANGUAGE MASTER INDEPENDENTLY AND CARDS WERE MADE TO REENFORCE TEACHING ACTIVITIES. TASK TIME HAD INCREASED TO 15 OR 20 MINUTES. SPEECH CONTINUED TO IMPROVE AND HIS VOCABULARY WAS INCREASING. RESISTANCE TO GROUP ACTIVITIES CONTINUED. HE, NOW, RAN AROUND AND CLIMBED ON THE PLAYGROUND. THERE WAS NO PEER INTERACTION. HE PLAYED A GAME - ALONE - OF GETTING LEAVES AND DROPPING THEM IN THE DRAIN.

THINGS RAN SMOOTHLY THESE FIRST SIX WEEKS. HE REMAINED EAGER AND SELF-MOTIVATED. HE WAS ALSO A CHARMER, SO THE TEACHERS HAD TO WATCH THEMSELVES TO BE SURE HE WAS NOT GIVEN UNEARNED PRIVILEGES.

SHORTLY AFTER THIS, THERE WAS A REGRESSIVE PERIOD. HE BECAME RESISTANT TO STARTING WORK ON ARRIVAL. PART OF THE PROBLEM WAS PROBABLY DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE FAMILY HAD JUST MOVED TO A NEW HOME. IN ADDITION, ONE OF HIS FAVORITE PEOPLE WAS VISITING. THE BEAUTIFUL WEATHER ALSO CREATED A PROBLEM. HE WANTED TO BE OUTSIDE. THERE WAS LITTLE TIME SPENT OUTSIDE AT HOME, DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE YARD WAS NOT FENCED, AND IT WAS NECESSARY FOR SOMEONE TO BE WITH HIM. AT SCHOOL, BERNIE WOULD GO TO THE DOOR, OPEN IT AND STAND ON THE TOP STEP. THE FACT THAT HE HAD MASHED HIS FINGERS IN THE DOOR DID NOT DETER HIM. IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE THIS, WE BROUGHT HIM BACK TO HIS DESK (WITH RESISTANCE) AND HAD A BRIEF TIME-OUT PERIOD. IT ONLY TOOK A FEW DAYS FOR BERNIE TO REALIZE THAT THIS WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE SCHOOL BEHAVIOR.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, IN SCHOOL, BERNIE STARTED TO EXHIBIT TEMPER TANTRUMS. AT TASK TIME HE STARED AWAY AND REFUSED TO COOPERATE. WE NOTICED (AS WE ATTEMPTED

TO EXPLAIN THE BEHAVIOR) THAT WE HAD GOTTEN LAX ABOUT SIGNING. THEREFORE, WE MADE USRE THAT WE USED SIMULTANEOUS COMMUNICATION. IT WAS AT THIS TIME THAT WE BECAME AWARE OF THE FACT THAT OUR SIGNING SEEMED TO HELP BERNIE REGAIN HIS COMPOSURE WHEN HE WAS UPSET.

ANOTHER THING WE NOTED WAS THAT THE TANTRUMS SEEMED TO BE A RESPONSE TO MATERIALS WE HAD WORKED WITH FOR A WHILE. TO SOLVE THIS, IT WAD DECIDED THAT WE WOULD VARY THE MATERIALS USED TO TEACH A SKILL. THIS SERVED TO LESSEN THE TANTRUMS. WE CONTINUED TO NOTE WHEN TANTRUMS OCCURRED AND REALIZED THAT BERNIE WAS LETTING US KNOW HE WAS BORED. WE CHANGED OUR APPROACH AND INTRODUCED NEW TASKS TO HIS PROGRAM. WE CONTINUED TO REVIEW LEARNED SKILLS, USING THEM FOR INDEPENDENT TASKS, TO BE SURE HE WAS RETAINING WHAT HE HAD LEARNED. LEARNING THIS NEED FOR BERNIE BROUGHT ABOUT A CHANGE IN OUR TEACHING METHODS WITH ALL THE CHILDREN. EACH SKILL TAUGHT IS NOW DONE WITH THE USE OF SEVERAL DIFFERENT MATERIALS AND APPROACHES.

THE "LISTEN AND DO" PHONICS PROGRAM WAS INTRODUCED IN NOVEMBER. THIS IS A RECORDED PROGRAM WITH WORKSHEETS. BERNIE WAS CAPABLE OF POINTING AND FOLLOWING THE DIRECTIONS GIVEN. SOME WORK HAD BEEN DONE WITH BEGINNING CONSONANT SOUNDS, SO HE WAS FAMILIAR WITH THIS TYPE OF ACTIVITY. PROMPT WAS REQUIRED TO UNDERLINE, PUT AN X ON AND CIRCLE.

HE NOW KNEW MOST OF THE BASIC COLORS AND COLOR WORDS. IN ORDER TO REENFORCE AND MAINTAIN THE SKILL WE MADE A GAME USING APPROPRIATELY COLORED SPRING TYPE CLOTHES PINS (THEY PROVIDED ADDITIONAL FINGER DEXTERITY TRAINING) COLORED CIRCLES AND COLOR WORDS TO MATCH. THIS WAS USED AS AN INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY.

CONCEPT WORDS AS LONGER, SHORTER, OVER, UNDER, IN FRONT OF, BEHIND WERE ADDED REGULARLY. HE HAD FEW PROBLEMS UNDERSTANDING THEM.

IT WAS ABOUT THIS TIME THAT BERNIE'S DESIRE TO HAVE EVERYTHING NEAT AND IN PLACE PRESENTED A PROBLEM. ONE CHILD STARTED THROWING MATERIALS AND HE WAS QUITE UPSET BECAUSE WE WOULD NOT ALLOW HIM TO PICK THEM UP. NOT GETTING HIS WAY, HE WOULD HAVE A TEMPER TANTRUM. THIS GRADUALLY EXTINGUISHED ITSELF.

VERBAL SKILLS WERE IMPROVING. NOUNS WERE LEARNED QUICKLY. VERBS GAVE SOME PROBLEMS. TO ASSIST IN DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING OF VERBS WE WOULD, IF POSSIBLE, PERFORM THE ACTIVITY.

BERNIE WAS AWARE OF THE DAYS OF THE WEEK AND KNEW WHAT HAPPENED ON GIVEN DAYS. HE WOULD TELL HIS MOTHER "GO TO SPEECH", "GO SEE MOLLIE", OR WHATEVER HAPPENED REGULARLY ON A PARTICULAR DAY. HE WOULD TELL THE TEACHERS "AFTER SCHOOL GO TO SPEECH", ETC. HE DID HAVE ARTICULATION PROBLEMS - ALL WORDS WERE NOT PRONOUNCED CORRECTLY. HE WAS NOW RIDING THE BUS IN THE MORNING, AS WELL AS IN THE AFTERNOON.

GRINDING TEETH WAS A BAD HABIT BERNIE HAD. IN ORDER TO LESSEN THIS, WE WOULD LIGHTLY TOUCH HIS JAW AND SAY, "NO GRINDING TEETH, BERNIE". IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE HE WAS SAYING "NO TEETH" WHEN WE TOUCHED HIS JAW. THIS GRADUALLY LESSENED UNTIL IT WAS ALMOST EXTINGUISHED.

ANOTHER PROBLEM SPRANG UP. BERNIE DID NOT WANT TO COME IN FROM PLAY PERIOD. PHYSICALLY FORCING HIM WAS TOO REENFORCING FOR HIM AND EXHAUSTING FOR US. WE RESCHEDULED AN ACTIVITY THAT WAS AMONG HIS FAVORITES - STORIES ON TAPE OR RECORD WITH FILMSTRIPS. WE TOOK THE CASSETTE OR FILM STRIP OUT AND WHEN PLAY PERIOD ENDED, WE SHOWED IT TO BERNIE. WE EXPLAINED IF HE DIDN'T COME IN, HE WOULD MISS SEEING IT. IF WE HAD TO FORCE HIM TO COME IN, HE WAS TIMED OUT AND MISSED THE FILM. HE COULD HEAR THE SOUND - BUT ONE OF US LITERALLY HELD HIM IN HIS OFFICE CUBICLE, CURTAINS CLOSED, SO HE COULD NOT SEE THE FILM. HE FUSSED THE WHOLE TIME - BUT AFTER THREE DAYS OF MISSING THIS ACTIVITY, OUR PROBLEM WAS SOLVED.

THIS WAS REPLACED WITH ANOTHER PROBLEM. HE STARTED RUNNING FROM THE PLAYGROUND (NOT FROM THE SCHOOL GROUNDS). THIS WAS SOLVED BY IMMEDIATELY RETURNING TO THE ROOM FOR A SHORT TIME-OUT. WITHIN A WEEK THESE BEHAVIORS WERE ELIMINATED. IT WAS ABOUT THIS TIME THAT BERNIE STARTED ASKING "GO GET WATER?". WE WOULD RESPOND, "YOU MAY GET WATER, BUT COME BACK HERE". SOON HE WAS SAYING, "GO GET WATER, COME BACK".

HAND FLAPPING WAS A SELF STIMULATION BEHAVIOR EXHIBITED WHEN BERNIE WAS EXCITED. OUR RESPONSE TO THIS WAS "GOOD HANDS, BERNIE" AND THEN PROMPT THE PLACING OF HIS HANDS ON THE DESK, BY HIS SIDE, ON HIS KNEES - WHATEVER WAS APPROPRIATE AT THE TIME. THIS BEHAVIOR WAS CONTROLLED IN THIS MANNER.

WHEN USING PICTURE STIMULUS CARDS DURING LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT WE NOW (IN DECEMBER) REQUIRED THE USE OF A PHRASE AS "BOY IS RIDING", "GIRL IS EATING". SOON WE REQUIRED "BOY IS RIDING BIKE", GIRL IS EATING BANANA", ETC. WE HAD ALSO STARTED THE ANSWERING OF QUESTIONS WITH YES OR NO.

BERNIE'S SIGHT VOCABULARY CONTINUED TO INCREASE. WHEN CHRISTMAS VACATION CAME HE COULD READ THE NAMES OF DAYS, CHILDREN'S NAMES, COLOR WORDS, SOME NUMBER WORDS AND SOME OF THE NAMES OF MONTHS. TO INCREASE HIS SIGHT VOCABULARY WE STARTED USING WORD MATCHETTES, AND MADE MATERIALS USING PICTURES AND WORDS. HE WOULD MATCH THE WORD TO THE APPROPRIATE PICTURE - WITH PROMPT WHEN FIRST INTRODUCED. AS HE ACQUIRED THE WORDS, THEY BECAME AN INDEPENDENT TASK. AGAIN WE USED SPRING TYPE CLOTHES PINS AND BERNIE WOULD CLIP THE APPROPRIATE WORD AND PICTURE TOGETHER. THIS TYPE OF ACTIVITY ALLOWED US TO CHECK ACCURACY LATER IN THE DAY, WHEREAS OTHER ACTIVITIES HAD TO BE CHECKED IMMEDIATELY.

HE WAS NOW COUNTING FROM 0 - 10 AND COULD PLACE THE PROPER NUMBER OF OBJECTS UNDER EACH, WITH LITTLE PROMPT.

TO ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF WRITING SKILLS WE STARTED WRITING HIS FIRST

NAME AND NUMERALS 0-10. KINDERGARTEN WORKBOOKS AND DITTO MATERIALS WERE INTRODUCED. COINIDENTIFICATION WAS STARTED. HE ENJOYED THESE ACTIVITIES. IN TEACHING ANY SKILL WE CONTINUED TO USE A VARIETY OF MATERIALS AND APPROACHES. AS A RESULT, THERE WERE NO TANTRUMS DUE TO LACK OF STIMULATION. REGRESSIVE PERIODS CONTINUED TO OCCUR PERIODICALLY BUT WE FELT SURE BOREDOM WAS NOT THE REASON. WE FELT THEY WERE PARTLY DUE TO THE FACT THAT BERNIE WAS LEARNING SO MUCH, SO QUICKLY, THAT HE NEEDED TIME TO DIGEST IT ALL. CHRISTMAS VACATION WAS GOOD FOR HIM, HE RETURNED AS EAGER AS EVER.

BY SEMESTER BERNIE WAS USING SOME SIMPLE SENTENCES INDEPENDENTLY, HAD A SIGHT VOCABULARY OF APPROXIMATELY 40 WORDS, COULD SEQUENCE 1-25, KNEW THE BASIC COLORS, AND COULD IDENTIFY SEVERAL BEGINNING CONSONANT SOUNDS. WE CONTINUED TO CONSTANTLY REVIEW LEARNED SKILLS. WE SWAPPED TASKS AT REGULAR INTERVALS TO BE SURE BERNIE WOULD PERFORM THE SKILL FOR OTHERS. HIS PARENTS WERE KEPT INFORMED OF ACQUIRED SKILLS. BERNIE, OFTEN, INFORMED THEM HIMSELF BY USING HIS KNOWLEDGE AT HOME.

SIGNING WAS DROPPED AT THIS TIME, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WOULD BE PICKED UP IMMEDIATELY, IF THERE WAS ANY REGRESSION IN HIS SPEECH. THE ONLY TIME WE USED SIMULTANEOUS COMMUNICATION AFTER THIS TIME WAS WHEN BERNIE WAS UPSET. IT STILL SEEMED TO HAVE A CALMING INFLUENCE. HIS MOTHER TOLD ME RECENTLY THAT SHE STILL USES SIGNING AT THIS TIME.

CUTTING WAS NOW DONE INDEPENDENTLY. HE COULD WRITE HIS FIRST NAME IF THE TEACHER'S HAND WAS ON HIS AND HE COULD WRITE 0-9 AND SOME LETTERS.

ON THE PLAYGROUND HE HAD GROWN MORE ADVENTURESEOM. HE FINALLY DECIDED HE COULD GO ALL THE WAY UP THE STEPS OF THE SLIDE (THERE ARE ABOUT 12) AND SLIDE DOWN. SOON AFTER THIS, HE STARTED TAKING LEAVES UP AND LET THEM DROP ONE BY ONE FROM THE TOP. HE WAS THROWING BALLS AT THE BASKETBALL GOAL, CLIMBING

THE MONKEY BARS AND OCCASIONALLY WOULD INTERACT WITH ANOTHER AUTISTIC CHILD. HE CONTINUED TO SPEND MUCH TIME OBSERVING THE OTHER CHILDREN.

FOOD REWARD WAS ABOUT PHASED OUT. SOCIAL AND VERBAL PRAISE AND HIS OWN FEELINGS OF SUCCESS BECAME THE IMPORTANT REENFORCERS.

PERIODS OF REGRESSION WERE NOT OVER. FEBRUARY'S END BROUGHT ONE THAT LASTED FOR SIX WEEKS. BERNIE WOULD WORK, BUT THE PERIOD HAD TO BE DECREASED TO APPROXIMATELY 10 MINUTES. WE HAD BEEN WORKING 20 TO 30 MINUTES. HE STARTED TAKING NAPS - SOMETHING HE HAD NEVER DONE IN SCHOOL. HE OFTEN SKIPPED SNACK TIME AND WAS NOT EATING WELL. FINALLY, IN CONFERENCE WITH HIS PARENTS, IT WAS DECIDED TO GIVE HIM A WEEK'S VACATION. IN WAY OF EXPLANATION, AS TO OUR REASONING, IN OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM THERE ARE MANY HOLIDAYS IN THE FALL, INCLUDING A WEEK AT THANKSGIVING AND TEN DAYS TO TWO WEEKS AT CHRISTMAS. AFTER THE FIRST OF THE YEAR THEY ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN. THIS PROVED TO BE THE ANSWER - BERNIE CAME BACK EAGER AND READY TO GO. INCIDENTALLY, THIS WAS THE LAST SERIOUS PERIOD OF REGRESSION WE HAD.

SKATING HAD BEEN STARTED. BALANCE CAME QUICKLY AND BY JUNE BERNIE WAS SKATING WELL - PUSHING ONLY WITH THE RIGHT FOOT.

WHEN SCHOOL CLOSED IN JUNE 1977, BERNIE HAD ACQUIRED MOST OF THE KINDERGARTEN SKILLS. THE GREATEST LAG WAS IN THE COMPREHENSION AREA - THIS BEING CAUSED BY HIS LANGUAGE DELAY.

IN THE FALL OF 1977, WE STARTED PRE-PRIMER READING (USING THE ECONOMY PROGRAM) AND FIRST GRADE MATH. IN ADDITION, WE REVIEWED ALL LEARNED SKILLS.

READING AND MATH MOTIVATED BERNIE. HE WAS QUITE EXCITED ABOUT READING WORDS IN A BOOK. HE LOVED TO TAKE HOME THE SMALL STORIES, CUT FROM OLD READERS, AND READ TO HIS MOTHER AND FATHER. WE MOVED AT A SLOW PACE, AS THERE WAS A NEED TO INCREASE LANGUAGE SKILLS FOR COMPREHENSION PURPOSES.

PHONICS WAS CONTINUED AND INCLUDED THE INTRODUCTION OF VOWEL SOUNDS. SPELLING OF SIMPLE CONSONANT-VOWEL CONSONANT WORDS WAS INTRODUCED. HOMEWORK WAS STARTED AND IF WE FORGOT TO GIVE IT TO HIM HE WOULD ASK FOR "HOMEWORK, PLEASE". IT WAS ABOUT THIS TIME THAT BERNIE DECIDED HE SHOULD TAKE HOME ALL THE MATERIALS WE USED TO WORK WITH THAT DAY. HIS SCHOOL BAG WAS STUFFED AND HE WOULD GET UPSET IF EVERYTHING WOULD NOT FIT. WE CORRECTED OUR ERROR IN ALLOWING THIS AT THANKSGIVING.

SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS AFTER SCHOOL STARTED HE WAS ABLE TO READ AND FOLLOW SIMPLE DIRECTIONS. HE ENCOUNTERED PROBLEMS WHEN THE DIRECTIONS READ "COLOR THE DOG BROWN AND BLACK". HE WOULD USE ONLY ONE COLOR. THERE WAS, ALSO, SOME PROBLEM WHEN HE WAS TO COLOR MORE THAN ONE OBJECT THE SAME COLOR. YOU WILL SEE BERNIE READING DIRECTIONS TO HIMSELF. NOTE THE DIFFICULTY WHEN THE DIRECTIONS SAY TO COLOR MORE THAN ONE LEAF A PARTICULAR COLOR. (VIDEO SEGMENT).

TO INCREASE HIS ABILITY TO ANSWER WHO, WHAT, WHEN AND WHERE QUESTIONS SEQUENCE CARDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF FAMILY AND CLASSMATES WERE USED. HIS MOTHER WOULD, ALSO, SEND NOTES AS TO WHAT HE HAD DONE IN THE EVENING, WHO WAS VISITING, ETC. WE, IN TURN, SENT NOTES HOME REGARDING SCHOOL ACTIVITIES. THIS HELPED WITH RECALL.

HE STARTED CALLING US BY NAME. IMAGINE MY DELIGHT WHEN HE SAID, "MRS. BOUDREAUX". THIS WAS FOLLOWED THE NEXT DAY WITH "MRS. ADOLPH". SHORTLY AFTER THIS HE WOULD TELL US, "MRS. BOUDREAUX GO TO LUNCH COME BACK, MRS. ADOLPH GO TO LUNCH". ANOTHER TIME, WHEN WE ASKED WHO WAS COMING TO VISIT, HIS RESPONSE WAS "GRANDMA ROE COMING, GO TO AIRPORT, GET SUITCASES."

THIS WAS A HAPPY, SUCCESSFUL YEAR. THERE WERE NO SERIOUS REGRESSIONS. LEARNING CONTINUED TO MOTIVATE BERNIE.

BRUSHING OF TEETH WAS STARTED AT THE REQUEST OF HIS MOTHER. BERNIE WOULD NOT COOPERATE AT HOME. WITHIN A WEEK, HE NO LONGER RESISTED US AND WITHIN A MONTH WAS REMINDING HIS MOTHER TO BRUSH THEM. BY THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR,

BERNIE WAS DOING SOME INDEPENDENT BRUSHING, AS YOU WILL SEE. THIS SEGMENT SHOWS BERNIE BRUSHING HIS TEETH INDEPENDENTLY AND COMLETING WITH PROMPT FROM Mrs. ADOLPH. (VIDEO SEGMENT).

By MID-YEAR HE COULD SEQUENCE THROUGH 60, IDENTIFY BEGINNING CONSONANT SOUNDS AND MOST ENDING SOUNDS. HE KNEW SOME VOWEL SOUNDS AND COULD SPELL C-V-C WORDS ON THE LANGUAGE BOARD. IN THIS VIDEO SEGMENT YOU WILL SEE BERNIE SPELLING. HE IDENTIFIES THE BEGINNING CONSONANT SOUNDS. THERE IS PROMPT, FIRST VERBAL AND THEN POINTING TO APPROPRIATE LETTER IF HE HAS TROUBLE WITH THE VOWEL SOUND. NOTE AT ONE POINT THAT BERNIE CORRECTS HIMSELF WHEN HE MAKES AN ERROR. HE PICKS UP ONE LETTER AND REALIZES IT IS NOT E FOR ELEPHANT. (VIDEO SEGMENT)

IN ALL SITUATIONS NEEDING VERBAL RESPONSE, FULL SENTENCES WERE REQUIRED. WHEN PROMPT WAS NEEDED THE PROMPT WAS, "TALK IN A FULL SENTENCE", OR "FULL SENTENCE BERNIE". MANY TIMES HE SPONTANEOUSLY SPOKE IN A FULL SENTENCE.

A NEW MACHINE - "SPELLBINDER" - ARRIVED. BERNIE, AS USUAL, LOVED IT AND COULD OPERATE IT INDEPENDENTLY IN A FEW DAYS. PROGRAMS INCLUDED PRE-READING, READING, PHONICS, SPELLING AND MATH SKILLS. IN THIS SEGMENT BERNIE IS WORKING INDEPENDENTLY, MATCHING PATTERN RESPONSE CARD TO PATTERN OF OBJECTS ON MASTER CARD. YOU WILL NOTICE THAT THE NOISE OF THE TEACHERS GIVING INSTRUCTIONS TO OTHER CHILDREN, A CHILD PASSING, DOES NOT DISTRACT BERNIE. WHEN HE WAS REALLY INTERESTED AND INVOLVED IN A TASK ALL HIS ATTENTION WAS ON IT. (VIDEO SEGMENT)

WRITING SKILLS WERE SLOWLY EMERGING. SENTENCE WRITING, WITH THE USE OF CAPITAL LETTERS AND PERIODS WAS STARTED. STORIES WERE WRITTEN. BERNIE WOULD BE ASKED A QUESTION, HE WOULD RESPOND VERBALLY, THEN HE WOULD WRITE THE ANSWER. SOME OF THE WRITING WAS BEING DONE BY BERNIE. THE TEACHER SPELLED THE WORDS AND HER HAND HAD TO BE ON HIS. HE STILL NEEDED THIS SUPPORT. (VIDEO SEGMENT)

ADDITION WAS UNDERSTOOD AND THERE WERE INSTANCES WHEN HE PERFORMED SIMPLE ADDITION MENTALLY. HE CARRIED SEQUENCE TO 100 AND COUNT BY FIVES AND TENS.

HE KNEW HOW TO TELL TIME BY THE HOUR, HALF-HOUR AND QUARTER HOUR. BY THE END OF THE YEAR MORE THAN ONE-HALF THE FIRST GRADE MATH SKILLS HAD BEEN ACQUIRED. HE HAD NOT COMPLETELY CONQUERED SUBTRACTION. HE LOVED TO WORK WITH "FLIP CHEX". AS YOU WILL SEE, HE WORKED SUBTRACTION WITH THE USE OF MANIPULATIVES. HE COUNTED INDEPENDENTLY AND IDENTIFIED THE NUMERAL NEEDED. HE SHOWS THE ABILITY TO READ THE PROBLEM INDEPENDENTLY. AT ONE POINT, HE COMPLETES A SEGMENT MENTALLY. (VIDEO SEGMENT)

READING WAS SLOW - NOT DUE TO AN INABILITY TO READ. HE LEARNED SIGHT WORDS QUICKLY. THE PROBLEM REMAINED HIS LANGUAGE DELAY. MUCH TIME WAS SPENT EACH DAY, USING ALL OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE HIS COMPREHENSION.

ON THE PLAYGROUND, HE WAS BEGINNING TO INTERACT WITH THE OTHER CHILDREN. HE IMITATED WHAT HE SAW THEM DOING, INCLUDING ONE DAY, DECIDING TO PLAY BASEBALL.

SKATING WAS FUN. HE BEGAN TO ALTERNATE FEET. HE PLAYED A GAME WITH THE TEACHERS. HE'D RUN AROUND THE TRAILER ON THE GRASS, GET WATER AND COME BACK - CHEEKS PUFFED OUT. SOMETIMES HE HAD A MOUTH FULL OF WATER. WITH HIS EYES TWINKLING, HE WOULD WAIT FOR US TO SAY, "SWALLOW THAT WATER, BERNIE" IN A STERN MANNER. HE WOULD THEN BURST INTO LAUGHTER. NOTE IN THIS SEGMENT THAT HE DOES ALTERNATE FEET - BUT AT TIMES PUSHES ONLY WITH HIS RIGHT FOOT. (VIDEO SEGMENT)

EXERCISE WAS NOW ENJOYED BY BERNIE AS HE WAS IMITATING AND NO LONGER NEEDED THE PHYSICAL PROMPT. THE NET SWING WAS STILL REWARDING, BUT HE WOULD NO LONGER SPIN IN IT. HE PUMPED IT AND LIKED TO SWING TO A PARTICULAR SESAME STREET RECORD.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, OUR TWO YEARS WITH BERNIE WERE A JOY TO US AS TEACHERS. HE TRULY MOTIVATED AND REWARDED US.

IN CLOSING, I MUST GIVE CREDIT TO THIS PARENTS AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS. THEY WERE VERY SUPPORTIVE OF BERNIE AND EACH OTHER. THEY GAVE MUCH TIME AND ENERGY TO ASSIST BERNIE ALONG HIS ROAD TO IMPROVEMENT.